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THE MILITANT

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 69/NO. 34 SEPT. 5, 2005

INSIDE

Socialist Workers candidates support Northwest strikers

—PAGE 3

Solidarity with Northwest strike!

Fight against union-busting assault is cause of all labor

The entire labor movement needs to stand with the 4,400 mechanics, cleaners, and custodians on strike to resist a union-busting assault by Northwest Airlines.

EDITORIAL

Nothing in the union movement is more important today than organizing concrete solidarity *in action* to help the strikers beat back the company's offensive.

The stakes are high. If the airline giant gets away with this attack on members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA), it will deal a blow to the whole union

Continued on page 9



Reuters

Mechanics and maintenance workers on strike against Northwest at its Detroit hub

UMWA event marks gains in union fight at Utah mine

BY DAVE FERGUSON

HUNTINGTON, Utah—"UMWA Local 9957—Here we come." Unveiling their brand-new T-shirts with the number of the new local of the United Mine Workers of America they have chosen, written in both English and Spanish, workers from the nearby Co-Op coal mine and their supporters gathered at Huntington State Park for a solidarity picnic sponsored by United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) District 22.

Among the crowd of 90 were family members of the Huntington miners, UMWA retirees, workers from union and nonunion mines in the area, and a few trade unionists from Western states.

At the August 21 event, UMWA representatives and miners updated participants on the new stage of the nearly two-year struggle for a union at the Co-Op mine, which is owned by C.W. Mining.

Welcoming everyone present, Co-Op miner Juan Salazar opened the

Continued on page 4

Northwest Airlines workers resist job, wage cuts

BY NELSON GONZALEZ

MINNEAPOLIS—Nearly 4,400 mechanics, cleaners, and custodians at Northwest Airlines went on strike August 19 at airports across the United States, rejecting the company's demands for deep cuts in jobs and wages.

Of the 9,700 mechanics and other members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association (AMFA) at Northwest four years ago, more than half have already been laid off. Now the company seeks to cut in half the remaining 4,400 jobs. It is demanding that workers take a 25 percent pay cut, a freeze in pensions, and an increase in subcontracting mechanics' work.

Northwest, the fourth-largest U.S. airline, says it needs $1.1 billion in concessions to remain profitable because of competition and high fuel costs.

Northwest is implementing a strike-breaking plan it has been preparing for

Continued on page 9

UK police lies further unravel in 'antiterror' killing of worker

BY ROSE KNIGHT

LONDON—The efforts of the British government to seize on the July 7 London bombings in order to boost the role of the police have suffered a setback after recent revelations about the police killing of Jean Charles de Menezes. Facts have emerged about the cold-blooded execution of the Brazilian-born electrician on the London Tube (subway) on July 22, as virtually

Continued on page 9

Also Inside:

Ottawa readies 2,000 troops for Afghanistan

BY MICHEL DUGRÉ

TORONTO—The top general in Canada's armed forces, Gen. Rick Hillier, announced in mid-July that his government is expanding its military intervention in Afghanistan. Canadian troops will be moved from the capital city of Kabul to the southern mountains near Kandahar, where they will be in direct combat situations. The soldiers began patrolling the streets of Kandahar August 6 in collaboration with U.S. troops.

Hillier said members of Joint Task Force Two, Canada's special commando unit, will be involved in combat missions against insurgent forces in southern Afghanistan. By February about 1,100 Canadian soldiers will operate from a new camp in the area. They will be heading up a new multinational brigade that will eventually operate under NATO, in cooperation with U.S. troops already there. Some 2,000 Canadian troops will be involved in the overall military deployment.

As a result of what officials call the "largest reinvestment in Canada's military in over 20 years," Canadian troops will be well armed, using new armored vehicles.

In introducing Ottawa's International Policy Statement, Defense Minister William Graham said that it is based on a "rich operational experience of the Canadian Forces, both in Canada and in locations ranging from Afghanistan to the Balkans to Haiti." The statement reads, "The first challenge is to strike the right balance between the Canadian Forces' domestic and international roles. In the current security environment, where the lines between these roles are less distinct than ever, the military must continue to carry out operations at home and overseas."

Hillier and other top military officials are criss-crossing the country to gain public support for this military drive.

"The London attack actually tells us once more: We can't let up," Hillier said. "These are detestable murderers and scumbags…. We're not the public service of Canada, we're not just another department. We are the Canadian Forces, and our job is to be able to kill people."

That course is a shift away from the "peacekeeping role" the Canadian army played in the last decades.

Officials from the opposition New Democratic Party (NDP) and Conservative Party welcomed Hillier's comments. "We have a very committed, level-headed head of our armed forces, who isn't afraid to express the passion that underlies the mission that front-line personnel are going to be taking on," NDP leader Jack Layton said.

As part of this patriotic campaign, Defense Minister Graham set foot on Hans Island, a tiny island between Canada and Greenland, that both Ottawa and the government of Denmark have laid claims to. His move received wide support in the capitalist media. "Hans Off Our Island" editorialized the *Ottawa Citizen* July 26.

Pressing the "antiterrorist" theme at home, Ottawa announced August 5 their intention to set up a no-fly list, which the government claims includes individuals who pose "an immediate threat to aviation security."



Truckers rally August 10 in Miami for relief from rising fuel prices

Miami truckers protest soaring cost of fuel

BY DEBORAH LIATOS

MIAMI—"*¡No más!*" (No more) chanted hundreds of owner-operator truck drivers as they rallied for relief from soaring fuel prices. Organizers said that many of the 639 trucks that left the dispatch point at Hialeah Gardens for the caravan on August 10 were turned away by police before arriving at the rally point in front of Miami City Hall.

The truckers are demanding the Department of Energy (DOE) establish an automatic fuel surcharge to be paid to the drivers by the contractors who hire them.

Most of the drivers at the protest haul containers at the Port of Miami-Dade. They own the truck cabs, but work for trucking companies that receive contracts from shippers for the containers they want transported.

With diesel prices at $2.45 per gallon, the DOE sets a fuel surcharge of 28 percent. "Companies might pay us 5 percent instead of 28 percent," Pedro Ramos told the *Miami Herald*. Other truckers might receive the full amount or no surcharge payment at all.

The action was organized by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and International Longshoremen's Association. While the owners of airlines and shipping companies have the power to impose fuel surcharges, Ron Carver of the Teamsters told the media, "The truck drivers who have to buy their own fuel are going into bankruptcy." The unions are demanding Congress pass legislation providing a mandatory surcharge to pay truckers more as diesel prices rise.

The independent truckers, who transport cargo to and from some of the major ports in the United States, staged a nearly two-week work stoppage in July 2004 until a federal judge ordered them to end their strike. The action protested low wages, rising fuel costs, an insurance surcharge imposed on them by port authorities that is deducted from their paychecks, antiunion laws, and long unpaid waiting periods. At that time diesel fuel prices averaged $1.75 per gallon, an increase of 32 percent over the previous 12 months.

The action last year in Miami by more than 700 drivers coincided with a strike and job actions by truckers at Port Newark, New Jersey, and at the Port of New Orleans. Smaller protests by truckers at Port Everglades, Florida, and other ports on the Gulf and Atlantic coasts also took place.

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Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant*'s views. These are expressed in editorials.

SWP candidates back Northwest strikers

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

NEW YORK—A few days after filing petitions with 20,000 signatures to put the Socialist Workers Party mayoral ticket on the ballot in the New York City elections, socialist campaigners joined striking Northwest Airlines mechanics on the picket line at LaGuardia Airport here.

From Minneapolis to Houston, socialist candidates called for supporting the striking unionists.

Martín Koppel, Socialist Workers candidate for New York mayor, brought solidarity to the strikers on an August 21 visit to LaGuardia. "We support your fight against Northwest and the concessions they're trying to impose on you," he said. The picketing mechanics, members of the Aircraft Mechanics Fraternal Association, told the team of socialist campaigners about the company's effort to slash jobs and wages and deal a crippling blow to the airline unions.

"The airline bosses will push more and more until we stand up to them and use the one effective weapon we have—union power," Koppel said. "We urge other unions and working people to join with you."

Workers on the picket line were eager to discuss their fight. "A few days before the strike, the company told us to clean out our lockers," said striking mechanic Eric Yudin, who has worked 14 years at Northwest. That was a clear signal of the company's determination to eliminate jobs and replace many of the striking mechanics, he noted.

Kevin McCarthy, an American Airlines mechanic and member of Transport Workers Union Local 562, was on the line to show his support. "If other companies see what Northwest can get away with, they will do the same," said McCarthy, who was on strike against Eastern Airlines during the 1989–91 walkout there.

The previous day Dan Fein, SWP candidate for city comptroller, joined the picket line with a team of campaigners. Strikers there were interested in hearing from Fein, a union meat packer, about an ongoing strike in Farmingdale, New York, by fellow members of the United Food and Commercial Workers union, over back pay and the firing of nine union members.



Militant/Joe Kapsner

Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers Party candidate for St. Paul mayor, campaigns August 23 with workers on strike against Northwest Airlines at Minneapolis/St. Paul Airport.

On August 18, Koppel, Fein, and Arrin Hawkins, SWP candidate for Manhattan borough president, filed with the New York City Board of Elections to qualify the socialist ticket for ballot status. They turned in 20,200 signatures—more than two and a half times the 7,500 signatures required—for the offices of mayor and comptroller, and 8,600 signatures for borough president, more than double the requirement for that post.

After filing, the socialist candidates met a number of women and men on their way inside City Hall for a conference on the conditions facing African women in New York.

Bosede Akande, who is originally from Nigeria, told the socialist candidates that in the morning conference session, "we talked about women who get divorces because their husbands did not want them to work. You should come and participate in this meeting," she told Hawkins and Koppel, who gladly accepted her invitation.

Many at the conference were pleasantly surprised to learn that the socialist campaign addressed the conditions facing working people worldwide. "We champion the efforts by semicolonial nations to expand access to electrification as a basic condition for social and economic advances," Hawkins said. It's needed to forge an alliance of working people worldwide to be able to fight and overthrow imperialist rule—from West Africa to the United States. That's what our campaign is about."

Minnesota socialist candidate fights firing

BY TOM FISKE

SOUTH ST. PAUL, Minnesota, August 23—Bosses at Dakota Premium Foods prevented Jacob Perasso, the Socialist Workers Party candidate for mayor of St. Paul, from returning to his job on the boning line today.

Perasso, his campaign supporters, and many co-workers in the plant say this is an attack on the union. The company refused to grant Perasso a leave of absence to campaign full time for three weeks. United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 789, which represents Dakota workers, is filing a grievance against the company's refusal to grant Perasso the leave.

Perasso and Rebecca Williamson, Socialist Workers candidate for St. Paul School Board, campaigned outside the plant with several supporters this afternoon. Dozens of workers stopped to speak with the candidates about Perasso's fight to be reinstated and to wish both candidates luck in the campaign. Eight workers bought the *Militant*, some driving up and holding their money out the window.

The company "seeks to weaken the union struggle in the plant," said Perasso in a statement released to the press today. "I have been part of efforts by UFCW Local 789 to resist speedup attempts by the company.

"On June 1, 2000, workers in the boning department gathered in the cafeteria and refused to work for seven hours until the company agreed to limit the line speed. Since then, there has been a victorious union-organizing drive to win UFCW representation and years of resistance that continues to this day. Last week 26 workers from the kill floor gathered at the union hall to discuss ways to defend themselves against the company speedup," Perasso said.

"One reason so many co-workers signed the petition for my leave of absence is that they wanted to help protect a fellow union fighter," he continued. "During these five years the company has been going after individual union militants, seeking to buy them off, intimidate them, or fire them."

During the three weeks Perasso was absent from work he was attending the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students in Venezuela. Since returning, he has visited the picket lines of the striking Northwest Airlines mechanics at the airport here. On the eve of the walkout, he spoke at a rally of these mechanics.

Successful 'NI' sales drive tops 3,200

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Over the course of a 21-week campaign to sell the two newest issues of *New International* magazine, socialists put 3,217 copies of the magazine into the hands of workers, farmers, and young people. This concerted effort, which ended August 22, was an important accomplishment, showing concretely the possibilities to widely distribute a magazine of Marxist politics and theory that explains the world today from the standpoint of the working-class line of march toward taking power.

The final week was the best by far since the opening of the campaign, with 193 copies sold, apart from the very successful sales at the recent world youth festival in Venezuela, where Young Socialists from around the world sold 438 copies.

In the final week, socialists brought the magazines with them on solidarity visits to the picket lines of striking mechanics at Northwest Airlines. "We visited the picket lines at Newark airport on the first day of the strike," said Nancy Rosenstock from Newark, New Jersey. "I got into a discussion with a mechanic who had worked for 20 years at Northwest. He really liked the front-page coverage in the *Militant* on the strike by airline workers in London so he picked up a copy. Then he took a look at the two *New International*s and seemed interested in the discussion on viewing working-class struggles from an international perspective, so he decided to buy both issues."

Ten more copies of *New International* were sold at an August 19–20 meeting of the Federation of Southern Cooperatives in Epes, Alabama. The meeting, attended by some 100 farmers and supporters, discussed how to fight against racist discrimination by government agencies and against farm foreclosures of land held by Black farmers for generations.

New International sales campaign March 26 – August 22

Country	Quota	Sold	%
CANADA	**150**	**166**	**111%**
UNITED KINGDOM			
London	**200**	**224**	**112%**
Edinburgh	55	53	96%
UK total	**255**	**277**	**109%**
AUSTRALIA	60	59	98%
NEW ZEALAND			
Auckland	**55**	**55**	**100%**
Christchurch	20	17	85%
N.Z. total	75	72	96%
SWEDEN	45	42	93%
UNITED STATES			
Chicago	**115**	**121**	**105%**
Miami	**110**	**113**	**103%**
Houston	**105**	**107**	**102%**
Atlanta	**115**	**117**	**102%**
Washington	**100**	**101**	**101%**
Philadelphia	**100**	**101**	**101%**
Twin Cities	**140**	**140**	**100%**
Birmingham	95	85	89%
Seattle	130	113	87%
Newark	125	105	84%
New York	325	265	82%
Salt Lake City	15	12	80%
Los Angeles	225	179	80%
San Francisco	205	161	79%
Boston	120	93	78%
Des Moines	105	81	77%
Price, UT	61	47	77%
Pittsburgh	100	59	59%
U.S. total	2291	2000	87%
ICELAND	32	22	69%
World Youth Festival	**250**	**438**	**175%**
pathfinderpress.com	200	141	71%
Int'l totals	**3358**	**3217**	**96%**
Goals/Should be	**3350**	**3350**	**100%**

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

ALABAMA

Birmingham

Meet the Socialist Candidates. Speakers: Clay Dennison for city council, Jeanne Fitzmaurice for school board. Fri., Sept. 2, 7:00 p.m., reception at 6:30 p.m. *3029A Bessemer Rd. Tel: (205) 780-0021.*

CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Defend A Woman's Right to Choose Abortion. Fri., Sept. 2, 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5. *4229 South Central Ave. Tel: (323) 233-9372.*

CANADA

Toronto

Imperialist Hands Off Iran! Fri., Sept. 2. Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Program at 7:30 p.m. Donation: $5 for dinner, $5 for program. *2238 Dundas Street West, #201. Tel: (416) 535-9140.*

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

The Bosses Offensive Against Working People. Speaker: Patrick Brown, Communist League candidate for Maungakiekie in general election. Fri., Sept. 2, 7:00 p.m. Donation: $3. *7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Tel: (09) 276-8885.*

Utah event marks gains in fight for UMWA at mine

Continued from front page

program, held under a large open-air park pavilion. Over the course of the struggle, miners have spoken in several cities around the country to reach out for broader union support. Salazar acknowledged that it was good to see some of the same people who had hosted the miners during their solidarity trips. He especially thanked those who had come to the picnic from as far away as California and Washington State.

Salazar turned the program over to fellow Co-Op miner Bill Estrada, who chaired the event and translated between English and Spanish.

"We started this struggle two years ago and we have made great progress," Mike Dalpiaz, UMWA District 22 international vice president, told the crowd. "But this project is not finished and the United Mine Workers don't start a project unless we can finish it." He said the UMWA looked forward to swearing in soon the members of the new Local 9957.

Solidarity with Northwest strikers

Dalpiaz encouraged the crowd to lend solidarity to the mechanics, cleaners, and custodial workers who are now walking the picket lines at Northwest Airlines around the country. "They have supported other unions during their struggles, now it is our turn to help them," he said.

The Co-Op miners were locked out of their jobs on Sept. 22, 2003. After a 10-month strike, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) forced a settlement on the company in July 2004 to give the miners their jobs back and allow for a union representation election. Just before the union vote last December, C.W. Mining fired more than 30 union supporters. The miners still cast their ballots, but the company challenged them. The fired workers have continued their struggle while they await a decision by the NLRB on the firings and challenged ballots.

Bob Butero, director of Region 4 of the UMWA, told the crowd that, although nothing is yet in writing, the NLRB has informed both C.W. Mining and the union that it is preparing to issue a ruling soon that the coal company illegally fired the miners last December. Butero said that as a result, "the miners' ballots will be counted in the near future." He pointed out the fight will continue to put the miners back to work under a UMWA contract.

"This battle will not be won through the NLRB, but on the ground with strength and unity," Butero emphasized. He thanked everyone for their support to the miners' struggle and encouraged them to continue their solidarity efforts and financial backing of the Co-Op miners' fight.

Another speaker was Tain Curtis, head of the safety committee of UMWA Local 1769 at the Deer Creek mine, which is down the road from Co-Op. That local has been a mainstay in backing the Co-Op miners from the beginning of the fight.

"Having a union at the mine gives you the freedom to air your grievances without fear of victimization," Curtis emphasized.

Mark Downs and Pat O'Connor, members of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union in Seattle, read greetings from ILWU locals 8 and 19. Greetings from other King County, Washington, labor organizations were also read out.

Messages were presented from United Food and Commercial Workers Local 400 members in Washington, D.C., United Steelworkers Local 12-578 in Salt Lake City, and a retired UMWA member from Ohio.

'If we won, so can you'

Rogelio Montes, an organizer for the Western Council of Industrial Workers, a division of the Carpenters union, spoke about a union struggle he was involved in at Snokist fruit packing company near Yakima, Washington. "We won a union election in 2002 by a vote of 236 to 5, but the company refused to recognize it and appealed everything to the NLRB. We had to strike for seven months, and now, we have our first contract. If we won, so can you. You cannot stop fighting."

Co-Op miner Bill Estrada wrapped up the program saying, "We will keep doing what we are doing—picketing the mine and other activities, to let people know we are still fighting. A victory here is important not only for the Co-Op miners but for other miners who are working without a union and want one. We are fighting for the future of this union."





Militant photos by Tamar Rosenfeld

August 21 solidarity picnic by UMWA District 22 for Co-Op miners near Huntington, Utah. Top: Mike Dalpiaz, UMWA international vice president (center), addresses crowd. Standing on left is Bob Butero, UMWA Region 4 director. To right of Dalpiaz are Co-Op miner Bill Estrada and California Teamster José Sandoval. Bottom: Co-Op miners (seated from right) Berthila León, Jesús Salazar, José Contreras, (standing) Alyson Kennedy, Bill Estrada, Juan Salazar, and Sergio Ponce.

Estrada said the potential to build the UMWA in the West is growing and that the Co-Op miners' fight is being closely followed by workers in nonunion mines and by coal truck drivers who also face tough conditions and a lack of dignity on the job.

Estrada also spoke about the sweeping federal lawsuit C.W. Mining has filed against the UMWA, 16 individual Co-Op miners, the *Salt Lake Tribune*, the *Deseret Morning News*, the *Militant*, and numerous other individuals, unions, and organizations that have supported the miners' fight.

"This is a retaliatory lawsuit. It is designed to shut up the miners and to silence any paper that covers our struggle," Estrada said. "They think they can take vengeance on us, but we're not scared.

The Salt Lake papers and the *Militant* have just filed new briefs with the court that answer the company's allegations and deal blows to C.W. Mining. If the newspapers win this round in the lawsuit at a hearing in early fall, it will be a big boost for the miners and the union," he said.

Other speakers at the event included José Sandoval of Teamsters Local 665 in San Jose, California; Luis Sánchez of Carpenters Local 22 in San Francisco; and, also from the Bay Area, Cecilio Santillana, a veteran of the struggle by former farm workers to reclaim unpaid wages owed to them decades ago by the U.S. government's Bracero Program.

A solidarity message on behalf of the Co-Op miners and signed by others at the picnic was sent to members of the United Steelworkers union on strike at the Asarco copper mines in Arizona.

Half of the 150 "UMWA Local 9957—Here We Come" T-shirts printed for the event were sold. The longshore workers and others took back small bundles of the T-shirts for distribution to their union sisters and brothers.

Retired miners and their wives from UMWA Local 9958 were instrumental in making the picnic a success. More than $1,000 was raised for the miners through T-shirt sales, donations, and a raffle. Retired miners and their families in the East Carbon area donated most of the raffle prizes. All of the food was donated by the Miners Trading Post, the grocery store in nearby Sunnyside.

Militant Fighting Fund wins backing at union event

C.W. Mining, owner of the Co-Op coal mine in Huntington, Utah, has filed a harassment lawsuit targeting individuals and unions involved in or supporting the fight of the workers there to organize into the United Mine Workers union. The Militant Fighting Fund was launched to help defend the Militant*, a prominent target of the coal bosses' suit. Endorsements and contributions to help defeat the lawsuit can be sent to the Militant Fighting Fund, P.O. Box 520994, Salt Lake City, UT 84152-0994. Materials on the case are posted on www.themilitant.com*

BY PAUL MAILHOT

HUNTINGTON, Utah—Supporters of the Militant Fighting Fund circulated among the crowd at the August 21 anniversary picnic for the Co-Op miners, talking to miners and their supporters. The crowd was eager to know about the latest developments in the fight against C.W. Mining's lawsuit.

Berthila León and Sergio Ponce, two Co-Op miners who have been stalwarts of the now almost two-year-long struggle for a United Mine Workers of America local at the mine, signed on as supporters of the Militant Fighting Fund and made a financial contribution. With León's and Ponce's endorsements, eight leaders of the Co-Op fight have now backed the campaign to fight against the anti-labor C.W. Mining lawsuit.

Pat O'Connor, one of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union members from Seattle, who traveled to Utah for the solidarity picnic, endorsed the Fund. "I'll gladly sign," he said, also giving a generous financial contribution.

* * *

The Militant Fighting Fund continues to make headway in gaining the backing of labor bodies for the freedom of the press rights of newspapers reporting on the Co-Op struggle and the fight of the miners and the UMWA to defeat this retaliatory lawsuit.

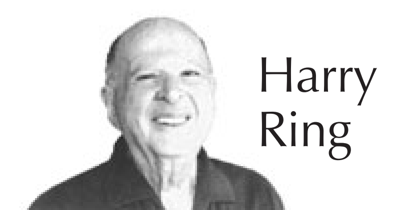
Recently, supporters of the *Militant* won the endorsement of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council in Ontario, Canada. "We wish our brothers and sisters success in their struggle," wrote John Cartwright, president of the council. The endorsement and a $200 contribution came through as a result of follow-up work on names received from a Toronto USWA official who endorsed the Militant Fighting Fund earlier.

This week, Claudia Hommel writes, "You'll be pleased to know the Chicago local of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists endorsed the Militant Fighting Fund and is sending a contribution." Several members of the local had already signed on to endorse and contribute to the defense effort.

* * *

The final chart on the successful effort to raise $60,000 for the *Militant* newspaper defense campaign was printed in last week's issue of the paper, but several more contributions arrived in the days after the August 15 deadline. An extra $954 was sent in, bringing the total to $69,742—116 percent of the goal!

Copy of the Pentagon space model?—The rocket Discovery is offering seats for a flight on a new route—orbiting the space ship around the far side of the Moon. Another plan is that it will return to Earth. Round trip tickets are $100 million.



Harry Ring

Capitalist 'education'—"Almost 10,000 pupils were permanently excluded from school in 2003–04…. Persistently disruptive behavior was the main cause of expulsion. More than 344,000 temporary suspensions were also issued last year."—*The Times*, London.

Watch those diapers and mom's pillow—The government "no fly" list includes a quarter of a million maybe's "linked" to alleged terrorism. The slap-dash list invites duplication so it includes infants. Babies spotted on the list are barred at the gate. One woman told a reporter her "no fly" infant daughter was barred. Also, at the time, the girl's mother was "hugely pregnant." She said that together, she and her daughter looked "really threatening."

Eh? Come again—The chief of police in St. Petersburg, Florida, declared an "error" in judgment was committed by cops who handcuffed an "unruly" kindergarten girl. But, the chief added, it was not a violation of policy.

In some things they're consistent—Parts of the Louisiana prison system are crafting a plan to have inmates cough up "small" co-payments to see doctors, and dentists. Mississippi is the only state more impoverished than Louisiana.

Chew on these numbers—Six years ago in its successful bid for office, the British Labour Party pledged a reform of the enlightened dental program by the National Health Service. A committee of Parliament now has reported that 2 million people are unable to obtain dental care.

Imperialism and numbers that count—The gap between rich and poor in Hawaii keeps growing. Since the 1970s, the poorest 20 percent of the people have lost 7 percent of their income. In the same period, the 20 percent of the richest enjoyed a 31 percent gain.

Strike in Tonga shuts down country, challenges monarchy



10,000 march in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, August 8 to support striking government workers.

BY FELICITY COGGAN

AUCKLAND, New Zealand—Three thousand government employees in the Pacific island kingdom of Tonga have been on strike since July 22.

"This is the first ever nationwide industrial action that can change the course of things in Tonga," Sione Vuna Faotusia, a leader of the newly formed Tongan Public Servants Association told Pacnews. In Tonga, which has a population of 112,400, civil service is the country's biggest employer, with more than 4,000 workers.

The workers are demanding pay increases of up to 80 percent for the lowest paid employees and an increase in the minimum wage. To date they have rejected three lower offers from the government.

Support for the walkout is growing. Many schools are closed as teachers are on strike. More than 100 college students marched through Nuku'alofa, the capital, August 3 to back their teachers. Two days later 600 workers at Tonga's main hospital joined the strike. Together with several hundred students, teachers, and representatives from the Catholic Women's League, they marched to the area where the strikers are assembled in central Nuku'alofa.

Some 10,000 people brought the city center to a standstill August 8 as they marched on the Royal Palace in support of the strikers' demands. Tonga is ruled by a monarchy with near absolute power, but in recent years it has faced growing demands for democratic reforms.

The strike follows a similar-sized protest in May against high power prices, and another shortly afterwards against a new 15 percent sales tax.

Pentagon releases plan for use of troops at home

BY SAM MANUEL

Under the guise of fighting "terrorist threats" within U.S. borders the U.S. military has, for the first time, drawn up plans to deploy troops on a war footing on U.S. soil.

Senior officials at the Pentagon and its Northern Command (Northcom) have discussed details of the classified plans in interviews with the press, according to an August 8 *Washington Post* report. The plans call for use of "quick-reaction" forces in response to 15 possible scenarios involving multiple and simultaneous attacks. As many as 3,000 ground troops could be used in response to each attack depending on its extent.

Pentagon officials stressed that the troops are intended to play a supporting role. By law, the U.S. military is constrained from involvement in policing. But they added that in some situations the military may have to "take charge," according to the *Post*.

Adm. Timothy Keating, the Northcom commander, told the paper that in the case of a nuclear, chemical, or biological attack inside the United States the Department of Defense would be in the best position to lead a response.

U.S. officials seek to gain greater acceptance for institutionalizing the option of domestic military deployments by draping such moves in civilian trappings. They seek to legitimize the use of the armed forces against future struggles by working people in the United States by making "civil disorder" a military matter, not solely a police matter for city, state, and federal authorities.

The Posse Comitatus Act of 1878 restricts the use of troops in domestic law enforcement. In the *Post* interviews, military lawyers asserted that the president could dispatch troops for action inside the country on his constitutional authority as commander-in-chief. Posse Comitatus exempts actions authorized by the Constitution, they say.

Another avenue considered in the plans to get around legal restrictions on the domestic use of troops is to draw on a common pool of soldiers from National Guard and active-duty units. This approach, which the plans call "dual-use," was first used last year at the Group of Eight summit in Georgia. National Guard troops, acting under state control, are exempted from Posse Comitatus prohibitions. Last year Congress expanded the authority to use National Guard troops for "homeland defense" missions, such as securing power plants and other vital facilities.

Northcom was initiated by the Clinton administration in the late 1990s—well before 9/11—and was launched in October 2002. It is one of nine "war-fighting" commands of the U.S. military. For the first time in U.S. history, a military command has responsibility for the continental United States, the rest of North America, and Mexico.

A tour of Northcom headquarters found officers "monitoring" aircraft and shipping traffic, the Discovery space shuttle mission, and the National Scout Jamboree, reported the *Post*.

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO

25 CENTS
THE MILITANT
A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY/PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE

Sept. 5, 1980

NEW ORLEANS—Gary Tyler, a young Black man who has spent the last six years in prison for a crime he did not commit, will receive a new hearing.

Tyler was framed up on charges of killing a white youth during a racist mob attack on a school bus carrying Black high school students.

As the bus carrying Tyler and other Black students left Destrehan High School in St. Charles Parish, it was surrounded by a brick-and-bottle-throwing white mob. Spotting a white man in the crowd with a shotgun, the students ducked under the seats for cover. A shot rang out and thirteen-year-old Timothy Weber fell dead.

Forcing Black students to lie on the ground, the police searched them and the bus for three hours.

Tyler protested the cop harassment. For this he was arrested for "disturbing the peace."

Police severely beat Tyler trying to get him to admit to seeing the person who fired the shot. He was later charged for the murder of Weber.

THE MILITANT
PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF THE WORKING PEOPLE
NEW YORK, N.Y. FIVE (5) CENTS

Sept. 5, 1955

Chicago, Aug.25—Strength, unity, solidarity and militancy, all in a measure greater than ever before, are the words that best sum up this strike that involves 40,000 Harvester workers who downed tools upon the expiration of their contact August 23.

Some 24,000 had already walked off by Monday, Aug. 22, and some as early as four days ahead of the time set. **Tractor Works**, Local 1301, President P. Neputy said: "the workers got tired of speed-up, low wages, lousy seniority and jumped the gun. They intend to stay out until their plant issues are settled along with their national issues."



THE MILITANT
Weekly Organ of the Communist League of America (Opposition)

Sept. 1, 1930

Every day brings news of intensified measures of repression against the Left Opposition in the Soviet Union. Stalin is taking new steps forward. In order to apply the "law" with even greater cynicism, he constantly extends the meaning of the accusations against our comrades. "Counter-revolutionist" addressed to them is not an insulting and lying epithet, it is an accusation involving five and ten years in prison. Comrade Trotsky has been expelled from the U.S.S.R. with the accusation of organizing "counter-revolutionary" movements—that is of organizing the Bolshevik, proletarian resistance to the pressure of class enemies whom the Stalinist apparatus fights in words.

Hundreds of militants, revolutionary workers, have been sent into places of deportation, then into prisons and solitary confinement under the lying accusation of "counter-revolutionary" activity.

Copper strikers in Arizona, Texas win solidarity in Mexico



Militant/Betsy McDonald

Copper workers, members of United Steelworkers Local 5252, on the picket line August 13 at Asarco's Ray Mine in Kearny, Arizona.

BY LESLIE DORK AND BETSY MCDONALD

KEARNY, Arizona—Seven weeks into the strike against copper giant Asarco by 1,500 workers in Arizona and Texas, miners at the Ray mine and the Hayden reduction plant and smelter remain determined to win a contract and defeat the bosses' concession demands.

The strikers received a boost when thousands of miners in Mexico held a solidarity strike August 15.

As we go to press, officials from the striking unions are considering Asarco's August 19 proposal to extend the previous contract by one year, maintaining current wages and benefits.

"We believe that this offer will end the strike and bring our employees back to work," said Asarco president Daniel Tellechea.

A number of Steelworkers indicated opposition to the offer. "I'm not going to go back for the same thing after eight weeks on strike," said Bill York, a general mechanic at the company for 20 years, according to the August 23 *Amarillo Globe*.

Robert Manriquez, president of United Steelworkers local 5252 here, told *Militant* reporters at the picket line that fewer than 20 employees other than managers have crossed the line at the two facilities. Twenty-four-hour pickets are being maintained by USW Locals 5252, 915, and 886. Many drivers in passing cars honked in support of the strikers. Several other unions have also walked out.

Tucson-based Asarco is the U.S. copper mining unit of Grupo México, which owns mines and railroads in Mexico and had picked up the Southern Peru Copper Corporation in its 1999 purchase of Asarco.

The Asarco bosses filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection August 10, two days before they resumed talks with the union bargaining committee.

"The strike isn't responsible for Chapter 11," said Local 915 president Tino Flores. "The company has been talking about bankruptcy since 1999, when Grupo Mexico bought Asarco in order to get their hands on Southern Peru Copper Corporation."

On the Local 5252 picket line, Mike Dinwiddie explained that the company was trying to use the bankruptcy filing to escape its environmental cleanup obligations and financial responsibility for the asbestos lawsuits pending against Asarco.

About 400 people attended an August 17 public meeting in the Hayden High School auditorium organized by the USW for union members and the community. Steelworkers representative Terry Bonds said the union rejected a request from the company a day earlier for workers to return to their jobs without a contract, the *Arizona Daily Star* reported." They just wanted us back to work because they're hurting, and that's something we're not going to do."

Pickets reported that a delegation of nearly 50 miners from the Cananea copper mines in northern Mexico—also owned by Grupo México—visited the picket lines and Local 915's headquarters in early August to offer solidarity to the strikers.

Thousands of miners from Cananea and other Mexican mines launched one-hour staggered work stoppages August 15 in solidarity with the strikers at Asarco and in support of striking steelworkers in the Mexican city of Monterrey.

Local 915 is organizing a food bank and collecting contributions for the strikers at Asarco. Support messages and contributions can be sent to Copper Workers Emergency Fund, c/o USW Local 915, P.O. Box 550, Kearny, AZ, 85237.

Judge overturns gov't rules weakening union protection for federal workers

BY SAM MANUEL

A federal judge blocked implementation of key parts of new personnel rules at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) that would have effectively ended collective bargaining rights for 60,000 union employees. DHS claims it needs the guidelines in order to carry out its mission to "fight terrorism."

In an order dated August 12, Federal District Court Judge Rosemary Collyer said the guidelines, which were to go into effect three days later, "fail to 'ensure that employees may…bargain collectively,' as required in the Homeland Security Act."

The White House has described the guidelines as a model for restrictions it would like to impose on workers at other federal agencies. They would also be used as a precedent by employers to try to impose restrictions on unions in private industry in the name of "national security."

Four unions and the metal trades department of the AFL-CIO, which represent workers at DHS, filed suit to block the regulations when they were published in February. The unions represent DHS employees not directly involved in "intelligence" gathering, counterintelligence, or investigations of "terrorism." Unions representing workers at the Defense Department held a rally in Washington in July to oppose the Pentagon's plans to implement similar rules.

The ruling said the 2002 Homeland Security Act gave DHS "extraordinary authority" to develop personnel guidelines "without regard to many of the constraints imposed by the civil service laws." Those laws already deprive unions of the right to bargain on any workplace issue in which terms are already set by federal law or any action taken by an agency deemed necessary in an "emergency."

The judge said the new rules would make any semblance of collective bargaining "illusory." They offer DHS numerous ways to unilaterally void contract terms. Any matter the agency agrees to negotiate can be taken off the table simply by issuing a new directive or policy.

"A system of 'collective bargaining' that permits the unilateral repudiation of agreements by one party is not collective bargaining at all," the decision states.

The rules would exempt DHS from having to negotiate over hiring practices, work assignments, contracting out work, or over procedures and equipment used by workers. The agency would not be required to negotiate over procedures for suspensions, firings, reductions in pay or grade, or disciplinary action against workers. Seniority provisions would be eliminated, allowing bosses to choose which workers to lay off.

The judge said she would consider any request from DHS to make the implementation of her order more selective. The agency has not indicated whether it will appeal the ruling.

The new work rules are the most recent attempt by the government to weaken or break the unions of government workers. In 2002 a presidential executive order denied union representation to more than 500 employees at the U.S. Attorney's office and other divisions of the Justice Department. The White House claimed union contracts could restrict the ability of workers "to protect Americans and national security."

In January 2003 the federal Transportation Security Agency issued an order barring airport screeners from joining a union, saying that collective bargaining is "not compatible" with fighting "terrorism."

Rumsfeld tours S. America, targets Venezuela, Cuba

BY PAUL PEDERSON

U.S. secretary of defense Donald Rumsfeld used an August visit to the South American nations of Paraguay and Peru to bolster Washington's military position in the region and press the two states to back U.S. efforts to isolate the governments of Venezuela and Cuba. U.S. officials have falsely claimed that the Venezuelan and Cuban governments are "destabilizing" the region.

Rumsfeld arrived in Paraguay a month after 500 U.S. troops began a series of military exercises with that country's army. In June the Paraguayan congress approved a pact granting U.S. soldiers immunity from prosecution. Washington, which is pressing governments throughout the region to sign similar agreements, had threatened to cut millions in aid if the government of President Nicanor Duarte did not agree to that demand.

In crisis-wracked Peru, Rumsfeld met with President Alejandro Toledo. Washington is hoping Toledo, whose popular approval rating is in the single digits, can last out his term, which ends in 2006. According to the American Forces Press Service, U.S. officials noted that Toledo, who is seeking U.S. economic aid, has built "the warmest defense relationship between the two countries in 40 years."

Peru and Paraguay both border on Bolivia, where mobilizations of miners and peasants have led to the downfall of two presidents in the past two years, including the resignation of Carlos Mesa in June.

"There certainly is evidence that both Cuba and Venezuela have been involved in the situation in Bolivia in unhelpful ways," Rumsfeld told reporters on his trip to Paraguay.

Arlen Spector, the Republican chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, objected to Rumsfeld's statement. "It may be very helpful to U.S. efforts to secure Venezuela's co-operation in our joint attack on drug interdiction if the rhetoric would be reduced," he wrote in a letter to the defense chief.

During his visit Rumsfeld reportedly expressed concern to the Paraguayan government about agreements it has made with Venezuela and Cuba. About 70 Cuban doctors are currently providing services to workers and peasants, and hundreds of Paraguayan youth are studying medicine in Cuba at no cost. The Paraguayan government has also recently signed an oil deal with Venezuela. Following Rumsfeld's visit, Paraguayan defense minister Roberto González told reporters there "will be no change" in his government's relations with Cuba and Venezuela. "Thanks to Cuba's solidarity there are 700 young Paraguayans on the island studying medicine and other careers free of charge," González said, according to the Associated Press. "With Venezuela we are moving forward with a very advantageous deal for trade in oil. In contrast, the United States and other First World countries have not shown Paraguay this type of solidarity."

González denied rumors that Washington was planning to set up a permanent U.S. base in Paraguay 150 miles from the Bolivian border. Just outside the town of Mariscal Estigarribia, U.S. troops have built an airstrip large enough to land B-52s and other large transport planes.

Despite the fact that the itinerary of Rumsfeld's visit was not publicized, word spread that Rumsfeld would be attending a ceremony at a military monument in Asunción, the capital. On one hour's notice, 100 mostly young protesters showed up with banners, including one that read, "No to the Yankee Troops!" According to the *New York Times*, their chants of "Murderer, murderer" were audible over the military band's rendition of the "Star-Spangled Banner."

On August 22 Pat Robertson, a right-wing TV broadcaster, said on the Christian Broadcast Network's "The 700 Club" that Washington should assassinate the Venezuelan president.

"This is a dangerous enemy to our south, controlling a huge pool of oil, that could hurt us very badly. We have the ability to take him out, and I think the time has come that we exercise that ability. We don't need another $200 billion war," Robertson said. "It's a whole lot easier to have some of the covert operatives do the job and then get it over with."

Venezuelan vice president José Vicente Rangel responded, "It's huge hypocrisy to maintain this talk against terrorism and at the same time, in the heart of that country, there are entirely terrorist statements like those." He said, "The ball is in the U.S. court after this criminal statement."



Tech Sgt. Kevin Gruenwald, USAF

Demonstrators in Asunción, Paraguay, protest August 17 visit by U.S. defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld (front row, center) across the street from ceremony he attended.

Ecuador protesters: use oil wealth for social needs

BY ARRIN HAWKINS

Widespread protests in northeast Ecuador that paralyzed the South American nation's oil production for a week ended August 21 as demonstrators and the government agreed to a truce. Local residents, mobilized by government officials and opposition parties, demanded jobs, roads, and other infrastructure improvements in Ecuador's oil rich provinces of Orellana and Sucumbíos.

Fueled by high unemployment and lack of basic services that exist at the same time that Occidental and other foreign oil giants take huge profits out of the country, the demonstrations initially called for higher royalty payments from foreign oil monopolies that would go directly to the local governments. As the actions unfolded, protesters called for nationalization of foreign-owned oil companies, a demand that has also been raised in neighboring Bolivia.

Ecuador is South America's fifth largest oil producer, at 200,000 barrels per day, more than half of which is exported to the United States.

Workers and indigenous peasants occupied oilfields, blocked highways, and took over two airports in Orellana and Sucumbíos, located in the Amazon region near Colombia and Peru. The state-owned oil company Petroecuador suspended crude oil exports.

In face of the explosive situation and the disruption of oil production, Ecuadoran president Alfredo Palacio declared a state of emergency August 17. Some 3,000 soldiers and police were then sent to take over the oilfields. Faced with the growing crisis, Ecuadoran defense minister Solon Espinosa resigned. The new minister, Oswaldo Jarrín, warned that the army would use "all its capacity" to crush the unrest.

Among the organizers of the protests who were arrested were Guillermo Muñoz, governor of Sucumbíos province, and Máximo Abad, mayor of Lago Agrio, the provincial capital. Abad is a leader of the Movement for Popular Democracy, an electoral formation led by the Marxist-Leninist Communist Party of Ecuador (PCMLE), a Maoist group.

Seven foreign oil monopolies have facilities in Ecuador. They include Occidental Petroleum, Encana of Canada, Repsol-YSL of Spain, Petrobras of Brazil, and Pecom Energia of Argentina. From 2002 to 2004, Occidental Petroleum tripled its oil production in Ecuador. These oil monopolies pay the national government 25 percent in royalties.

Oil is Ecuador's main source of income, accounting for 44 percent of its total exports and one-fifth of its gross domestic product. Despite its oil wealth, Ecuador is burdened with $16 billion in debts owed to U.S. and other imperialist banks.

Ecuador, which relies heavily on hydroelectric power, imports electricity from Colombia during the dry season. Barely more than half the rural population has access to electricity.

In the wake of the disruption of oil supplies by the protests, Ecuadoran energy minister Iván Rodríguez said his government would ask Venezuela to loan oil to Petroecuador so it could honor export contracts with Occidental, Encana, and other oil monopolies.

UK airline catering workers protest firings



Militant/Jonathan Silberman

LONDON—Hundreds of members of the Transport and General Workers' Union have held daily protests—like the one above on August 20—against their dismissal by airline catering company Gate Gourmet. The protest site, not far from the company's south plant near Heathrow Airport, is becoming a focus for other trade unionists bringing solidarity.

Workers cheered when the High Court rejected a company move to have the protest stopped alleging that it was intimidating. The judge also ruled, however, that the pickets outside the plant cannot be more than six and cannot approach workers going in or out of work.

The union-busting firings have been months in preparation. The *Daily Mirror* reported August 15 on a confidential company memorandum written a year ago that outlined the plan: "Announce intention to trade union, provoking unofficial industrial action from staff. Dismiss current workforce. Replace with new staff." Gate Gourmet established a new company, Versa Logistics, to "counter the threat of wildcat strikes and to hire workers on lower wages," the paper reported.

—JONATHAN SILBERMAN

Russian Revolution and the fight against colonialism

Below is an excerpt from To See the Dawn: Baku, 1920—First Congress of the Peoples of the East*, one of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for September. The Communist International convened the September 1–7 First Congress of the Peoples of the East in Baku, capital of Soviet Azerbaijan. Attended by 2,000 worker and peasant delegates, it represented a new stage in the emancipation struggle of colonial peoples opened by the October 1917 revolution in Russia. Gregory Zinoviev was a central leader of the Bolshevik party and the Communist International. Copyright © 1993 by Pathfinder Press. Reprinted by permission.*

BOOKS OF THE MONTH



Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Bolshevik leader Gregory Zinoviev, at table in dark suit, with other delegates to the September 1920 Congress of the Peoples of the East in Baku, Azerbaijan.

BY GREGORY ZINOVIEV

From the first day of its existence, the Communist International said: In Asia live four times as many people as in Europe; there are 800 million people in Asia. And we want to free all the peoples, a1l the toilers, regardless of the color of their skin, regardless of whether they are white, black, or yellow.

We want to do away with every kind of exploitation of man by man. In our view, anyone who does not understand this stands outside the ranks of socialism. We fight against those who help the bourgeoisie or stand aside when the task is to help the oppressed peoples. We are for organizing the blacks and all others who live by their labor, for organizing all the working people and all suffering and weary humanity, for struggle against the capitalists, the world's oppressors.

This was why, when we concluded our work at the Second Congress of the Communist International, we swore an oath and issued a manifesto in the name of the Communists of thirty-seven countries.

In this manifesto, addressed to the workers and peasants of the entire world, we wrote these words: "The Socialist who directly or indirectly supports the privileged position of one nation at the cost of others, who has made his peace with colonial slavery, who makes a distinction between peoples of different races and skin colors, who helps the bourgeoisie of the metropolis to preserve its domination over the colonies instead of helping the cause of the armed rebellion of the colonies, the British Socialist who fails to support by all possible means the rebellion in Ireland, Egypt, and India against the London plutocracy—such a Socialist deserves, if not the bullet, then certainly the mark of infamy, and no mandate or confidence from the proletariat."

This was our declaration, this was the solemn oath that we took before the workers of Europe and America, and that we solemnly repeat in Baku before the representatives of the laboring masses of the entire East assembled here.

We shall fight to the death against those who forget, even for one moment, their duty to the oppressed nations, to the laboring masses of countries that are being plundered and exploited by capital...

Comrades! Much has been said about "holy war" in recent years. The capitalists, when they were waging their accursed imperialist war, tried to present that slaughter as a holy war and made many people believe this. When they spoke in 1914–18 of a "holy war," that was a monstrous deception. But now, comrades, you, assembled here for the first time in a congress of peoples of the East, must proclaim a genuine holy war against the robbers, the Anglo-French capitalists. Now we must say that the hour has sounded when the workers of the entire world can arouse and raise up tens and hundreds of millions of peasants, can form a Red Army in the East as well, can arm and organize a revolt in the rear of the British, can hurl fire against the bandits, can poison the existence of every insolent British officer who is lording it in Turkey, Persia, India, and China.

Comrades! Brothers! The time has now come when you can set about organizing a true people's holy war against the robbers and oppressors. The Communist International turns today to the peoples of the East and says to them: "Brothers, we summon you to a holy war, above all against British imperialism!"' *(Loud applause. Prolonged shouts of "Hurrah!" Members of the congress stand up, brandishing their weapons. The speaker is unable to continue for some time. All the delegates stand up and applaud. Shouts: "We swear it!")*

May this declaration made today be heard in London, in Paris, and in all the cities where the capitalists are still in power. May they heed this solemn oath sworn by the representatives of tens of millions of toilers of the East, that the rule of the British oppressors in the East shall be no more, that the oppression of the toilers of the East by the capitalists shall cease!

Long live the fraternal alliance of the peoples of the East with the Communist International! May capital perish; long live the reign of labor! *(Burst of applause)*

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EDITORIAL

Solidarity with Northwest strikers

Continued from front page

movement and all working people.

Labor everywhere should put in practice the call to union members by International Longshore and Warehouse Union international president James Spinosa "to do everything in their power to help these workers in the struggle as if it were your own."

Northwest has prepared its strikebreaking operation for 18 months, organizing a scab force of 1,900. The company seeks to cut half the mechanics' jobs—for a second time—as well as to slash wages and benefits. They want to break the union and send a signal to the Machinists and flight attendants that they are next.

The bosses have blood in their mouths. The offensive at Northwest is part of a decade-long assault by airlines employers. They are driven by declining rates of profit and resulting cutthroat competition—the normal operations of capitalism.

The airline magnates are emboldened by union officials' acceptance of the argument that workers must "sacrifice" in order to "save our airline." But every giveback has only led to more and more concession demands. At United, American, USAir, and Delta, the bosses have used bankruptcy proceedings, or threats, as a cover to slash billions in wages and benefits and tear up pensions.

Every union and unionist in North America and worldwide should honor the Northwest strikers' picket lines. Individual Machinists and flight attendants in many cities have been visiting picket lines. In a few instances, despite the IAM officialdom's refusal to extend solidarity, some Machinists members are not crossing picket lines. The pilots' association at UPS said its members will not fly Northwest Airlines struck goods. Members of the Transport Workers Union at American Airlines have been walking the line in some cities.

To allow the bosses to use the strike to pit the IAM against AMFA over representing mechanics and other airline workers is the road to disaster for labor. The road to strengthening the labor movement and union solidarity is for workers to enlist their locals' support for the strikers and help bring fellow unionists and others to reinforce the picket lines. Financial support and solidarity messages are needed. Two recent examples are messages sent by the Central Labor Council in Alameda County, California, and the Netherlands-based Aircraft Engineers International.

The way to stand up to the bosses' unrelenting offensive is to use union power and broaden solidarity. A good example is the coal miners in Huntington, Utah, who on August 21 celebrated the gains they have made through two years of tenaciously fighting for a union and winning broad labor support.

To push back Northwest's antiunion assault, the strikers need the active backing of the entire labor movement and other workers, farmers, and students. This is the time to act on the longtime slogan of the working-class movement, "An injury to one is an injury to all."

4,400 strike Northwest Airlines

Continued from front page

18 months. It has organized 1,200 scab mechanics and hundreds of managers to keep operating its 1,500 daily flights. It is outsourcing much maintenance work and has employed Vance Security, the strikebreaking outfit.

Faced with this union-busting operation, AMFA members on the picket line said they felt they had no option but to strike. The walkout began after a 30-day "cooling-off" period imposed by federal mediators.

"We're going to do what we have to do, if it means taking the company into bankruptcy and taking this company down," said Steve Sutherland, vice president of AMFA Local 33, at a prestrike rally of 200 union members held here.

A union flyer explains that AMFA offered "a 16 percent pay cut, 20 percent out-of-pocket contribution to medical costs, and substantial work rule changes." The company turned down the offer as not enough.

The offensive by Northwest is part of a decade-long drive by all the major carriers against airline workers' wages, job conditions, and pensions. United Airlines and USAir have used bankruptcy proceedings—and American Airlines and Delta have threatened to do so—as a cover to impose wage and benefit cuts and to tear up pension agreements involving tens of thousands of workers organized by the machinists, flight attendants, and pilots unions.

Union officials have accepted employers' argument that workers must "sacrifice" to keep the airlines profitable and that concessions prevent the loss of jobs and benefits. Every round of cuts, however, has led to more takeback demands.

Michael Smith, an AMFA mechanic on the picket line in the Twin Cities, stated, "If this were just about wages we would settle. I know many nonunion people that don't want to see us go down. We are fighting for a way of life and the future."

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union has urged solidarity with the striking unionists. In a letter to ILWU locals, James Spinosa, international president, said, "I ask all ILWU members to do everything in their power to help these workers in the struggle as if it were your own."

"That the employer would spend the money to hire, train, and house more than 1,000 scabs," said the ILWU president, shows that the real issue is "the busting of your union."

Kevin McCarthy, an American Airlines mechanic at New York's LaGuardia airport, said his union, the Transport Workers Union, decided that its members will not work on Northwest aircraft.

At the prestrike rally of 200 workers here, one of those invited to say a few words was Jacob Perasso, Socialist Workers candidate for mayor of St. Paul. "When people ask me how they can support my campaign, I tell them to come out and join the union members of AMFA on the picket lines. My campaign supports the fight for unions and the extension of union power." Perasso, a member of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 789, pledged to work to bring co-workers to support the strike.

Members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), Professional Flight Attendants Association (PFAA), and Airline Pilots Association are also on Northwest's chopping block.

Officials of those unions, however, have told members not to honor the picket lines. The IAM and AMFA officialdoms have been hostile to each other since Northwest mechanics voted in 1998 to leave the IAM and join AMFA, whose officials says its role is to protect a "highly skilled craft."

In an August 9 letter responding to an AMFA request for support, IAM vice president Robert Roach stated, "IAM members will not be duped into standing with AMFA…. If AMFA wins, the IAM members lose."

A statement by IAM District 143 in St. Paul says all IAM members "should continue working their regularly scheduled shifts and immediately report any AMFA threats or confrontations to IAM representatives." The statement adds that any individual Machinist who chooses to honor the picket line will be "fully supported" by the IAM.

The PFAA, too, voted to direct "all members to report to work as scheduled."

Top AFL-CIO officials have said that federation will not support the strikers at Northwest.

José Cardona, a Northwest mechanic in Detroit, said in a phone interview, "While at the top level the IAM does not support our strike, a lot of members of that union have stopped by to show their solidarity. I think that's important."

"The labor movement needs unity right now and that means solidarity on the picket line," said ILWU president Spinosa in his statement. "An injury to one is an injury to all."

To send letters of solidarity, fax AMFA at (603) 527-9151 or e-mail admin@amfanatl.org.

Jacob Perasso and Joseph Kapsner in St. Paul, Arlene Rubinstein in Atlanta, and Brian Williams in New York contributed to this article.

New revelations on UK cop killing

Continued from front page

every aspect of the official police version of the events has been exposed as false. A public debate has broken out in the media, with some calling for the dismissal of the head of the Metropolitan Police, Ian Blair.

In face of the controversy, police officials have said they will review their shoot-to-kill policy, which came to light with the killing of de Menezes, but will not end it.

ITV News reported August 16 on documents "leaked" from the Independent Police Complaints Commission (IPCC), which was set up in April 2004 to investigate accusations of police violence or abuse. The papers included statements from police involved in the surveillance and shooting of de Menezes, as well as a pathology report and photographs of the man's body on the floor of a Tube train after he was killed. On August 18 a clerk at the IPCC was suspended for allegedly leaking the documents, the *Times* of London reported.

The day after several failed bomb attacks here July 21, heavily armed cops followed de Menezes into a Tube station and killed him, pumping multiple bullets into his head. At first, police officials falsely stated that he was "directly linked" to the July 21 incidents. They claimed the 27-year-old worker, who had been followed by police from the moment he left his apartment building, seemed "suspicious" because he was wearing a "padded jacket," had run from the cops, and jumped a turnstile.

The story quickly began to unravel, however. By the next day Ian Blair was calling the killing a "tragedy," while continuing to justify the shoot-to-kill policy.

The recently leaked documents shatter the police version of events from beginning to end. Witness statements revealed that de Menezes was not clearly identified by the police surveillance team as he left his flat, nor was he stopped in the 29 minutes it took him by bus to reach the Stockwell Tube station and board the train. TV footage showed he was not wearing a padded jacket—it was a denim jacket—and that he did not vault over the ticket barrier. Instead, he used his travel pass, picked up a newspaper and walked in, breaking into a run only to catch his train.

The accounts of the actual execution were even further from the truth. Scotland Yard said the worker ran onto the train with armed officers chasing him. That afternoon Ian Blair told a press conference: "The man was challenged and refused to obey police instructions."

In the leaked documents, one of the cops explained that after de Menezes had taken a seat on the train, "I grabbed him by wrapping both arms around his torso, pinning his arms to his side. I pushed him back on the seat. I then heard gunshots very close to my left ear." Police from the SO19 firearms unit fired 11 times, putting seven bullets in his head. They did not identify themselves or attempt to arrest him.

Call for police chief resignation

Members of the de Menezes family have called for the resignation of Ian Blair and accused him of lying about the shooting and attempting a cover-up.

With the ongoing debate in the media on whether Ian Blair should be fired, Prime Minister Anthony Blair is backing his police chief.

The Brazilian government has sent two judges who are conducting an inquiry into the killing to meet IPCC officials in London.

In an interview on Radio 4, Ian Blair rejected accusations of a police cover-up and said the killing of the worker should be "put in context." He said, "Tragic as the death of Mr. Menezes is, and we have apologized for it and we take responsibility for it, it is one death out of 57," referring to those killed in the recent bombings.

The parents of de Menezes, who live in Brazil, have told the press they turned down a police offer of $1 million (£560,000) as compensation to buy their silence. Maria de Menezes, mother of the slain man, denounced it as "blood money" and said no amount of cash would stop the family's campaign for justice. The police admitted they had discussed offering the family money for "initial expenses," the BBC reported.